

Romanesque Art

The Romanesque concept of style was determined in the early 19th century in France and described artistic phenomena which arose around the turn of the first millennium parallelly in France and Germany as well as in Italy and Spain.



The root and main source of Romanesque architecture is late Roman and early Christian architecture, conveyed partly by the culture of the Carolingians and enriched with elements of the Byzantine and Islamic cultures. Painting, the art of sculpture and handicraft programmatically submitted to the Christian doctrine of salvation for which architecture makes the stage and scenery (portal sculpture, pictures of sanctuaries). Secular art was marked by princely or noble representation and was varied, though far less traditional. In the wake of progressive feudalism, Romanesque style soon extended all over Europe. It is very difficult to limit this first comprehensive style of occidental history of art to a certain period, as it depended on regionally

variable factors of geography, church and rule. In France, the main creative period of Romanesque style lasted from approx. 1050 until 1150, with 50 years of preparation and a further 50 years of gradual transition to Gothic style.

In the Kingdom of Germany, also the dynastic concept of "Ottonian art" instead of "Pre-Romanesque" was accepted as the art of the late 10th and early 11th centuries, but there was a gliding transition. The epochs of the Salians and Staufer, from the second quarter of



the 11th century until the middle of the 13th century, are referred to as the actual Romanesque period. The development in Austria which, due to the still inconsistent rule during this period and according to geographical criteria is better called the Eastern Alps area, and in today's Slovenia follows German art in many aspects.

Architecture, the art of sculpture and painting went different ways depending on the horizon of the patron and the capacities of the artist.

However, since the 13th century, starting in France, the Gothic period began to establish itself on a broad basis. After centuries of oblivion, the monumental sculpture became the important task for sculpture again – portals, cloisters and capitals as the bearers of Christian

symbolism become graphic testimonies to the doctrine of salvation as well as the repulse of demons.



In religious paintings, frescoes predominated, whose style was fundamentally conveyed by Byzantium, particularly in the Eastern Alps area and where the symbolism of the doctrine of salvation is prior to the additive-narrative function. Some monasteries developed into centres of book illumination and, while doing so, developed local traditions – also their purpose is the praise of God by means of representative upgrading of the Holy Scriptures. A specific characteristic of arts and crafts, which also served the religious representations, was the development of specialised workshops and techniques in certain regions. Their products were traded Europe-wide or at least supraregionally and contributed their share to the Europe-wide distribution of types, shapes and stylistic features, such as enamel works from Limoges or procession crosses from Southwest Germany or Northern Italy.